**Distinguished Leadership in Practice**

Assignment 3.1

Collaboratively Assess Cultural Leadership in Your School

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The Cultural Leadership Assessment Team gave an online survey to the Hollister Elementary Staff. Fifteen of the staff responded to the survey. The purpose was to collaboratively assess the cultural leadership in our school. Based on the results, we have identified 6 areas that need to be addressed with the staff.

Area 1: Creates a collaborative work environment predicated on site-based management that supports the “team” as the basic unit of learning and decision-making within the school. At Hollister, 40% of the staff agreed and 40% of the staff strongly agreed with this statement. However, 13.3% of the respondents recorded that they disagreed with this statement. They are feeling that the work environment does not support the team as the basic unit of learning. Our team feels like work needs to be done in this area of building consensus. One way to do this is through the school improvement team and using that as a forum for making decisions. Perhaps through this team, people will feel like they have a voice.

Area 2: Promotes cohesion and cooperation among staff. Among the survey participants, 6.7% disagreed with this statement. While most of the staff agreed with this statement, one person felt like there is not cohesion and cooperation among the staff. I think it is important to find out who this person is and why they feel that way. The best way to address this issue is again through an active SIT and allowing the team the freedom to work together as a team.

Area 3: Influences the evolution of the culture to support the continuous improvement of the school as outlined in the school improvement plan. Again, one person disagreed with this statement. Ms. Amason, as a new principal at this school, has done an excellent job with this. She has supported the implementation of the school improvement plan and has given the team responsibilities to make decisions. I believe that this area is weak because of the new principal at the school.

Area 4: Systematically develops and uses shared values, beliefs, and a shared vision to establish a school identity that emphasizes a sense of community. One person disagreed with this statement. The school has a vision statement; I am not sure how current the vision statement is. As a staff, we need to revisit the vision of the school and make sure we all have the same vision for the school.

Area 5: Systematically and fairly acknowledges failures and celebrates accomplishments of the school and staff. Two staff members disagreed with this item. The school does a fair job acknowledging failures and celebrating accomplishments. I have not seen public celebration for individual accomplishments. We agree a weekly email or staff newsletter to celebrate accomplishments is needed. It is important the staff members honor and recognize those who have worked to serve the students and the purpose of the school. We need to speak frequently of the deeper mission of the school. We must become storytellers, sharing with others the stories of success and achievement.

Area 6: Promotes cohesion and cooperation among the staff. Two staff members disagreed with that statement. To promote this cohesion and cooperation, we must as a staff has a shared sense of purpose. Staff meetings need to be held where the staff creates this shared sense of purpose and where norms are established that highly regard collegiality, improvement and hard work. Ms. Amason needs to continue to communicate core values in her everyday work. Also, we must uncover and articulate what the core values are and to identify which aspects of the culture are destructive and which are constructive.

Because there is new leadership this year, it seems like we must as a staff have some discussions on shared values and beliefs. We must find ways to celebrate accomplishments. As we do this, we hope to see even greater successes with our students.